

**Behind The
Front Page**

Spying On U.S. 'Simple'

By JOHN PENNEKAMP

IT ISN'T difficult for a foreign spy to do his work in the United States if he follows a few simple rules the



first of which is to cultivate the friendship of women — particularly the wives of men in high places.

So says a spy who has been convicted of gross espionage in Sweden and sentenced to life imprisonment. He may be paroled in 10 years.

He is Stig Eric Constans Wennerstroem, 57, who as a colonel in the Swedish Air Force spied for the Russians from 1948 until 1963. From 1952 to 1957, he was Sweden's air attache in Washington.

SWEDEN has made a translation of Wennerstroem's investigation and questioning available to the Senate's internal security subcommittee. When he was given the U.S. assignment, Wennerstroem said, his briefing officer explained that he would find "the position of women" here entirely different when compared with Sweden.

And so it was. "Since the ladies," he testified, "were always present, it was in almost all cases a double contact, partly between myself and the officials, partly between our wives."

THE KNOWLEDGE was useful to him, too, he said, when he met officers and officials of lower rank with whom he had dealings.

He always cultivated the "chiefs" at the highest level, then when he got down to doing business with the lesser lights a little name dropping opened doors.

The "assistants" always were impressed when they saw the spy or his wife in friendly social conversation at "a greater reception."

Wennerstroem wasted no time on the assistants who did not have a direct contact with the higher chiefs. If one of the chiefs suggested to a lower official "that he should help me in my mission as much as he could," that was a major progress.

"Such a little example," he said, "makes a tremendous impression, in any case in America, on a subordinate official."

HIS SWEDISH assignment in the United States was of a general nature, but his work for the Soviet was specialized.

"It was explained to me that the main job was to send descriptions of equipment of exclusively modern design, with all details, drawings, diagrams and similar illustrations to be of value to the Russian designers.

"The purpose was to obtain new ideas and improve conventional designs in the Soviet Union; the final objective was to save time in the process of development."

HIS SWEDISH position was of much help to him in doing his Soviet work. Most

of the information Sweden asked for was not restricted and readily obtainable. It established confidence in him.

"At defense industries," said Sen. James O. Eastland, committee chairman, "he would indicate that Sweden was interested in purchasing a product. He would therefore experience little difficulty in getting the detailed plans. He was rarely asked if he was authorized to see secret material, and when he was he answered in the affirmative."

Said the spy: "They did not ask for verification and, in general, this was based on the fact that I had been introduced from the top by the highest chief."

In the Pentagon, too, he could get around. Once the Soviets asked him to check on a "surprise action," which they had been told the United States was planning.

He made the rounds of "a great number of contacts" in the Pentagon and was able to report back "the overall impression that it was impossible that anything was under way since nobody was in a particular rush."

WENNERSTROEM placed his intelligence on microfilm and usually handed it to his Soviet contact in a handshake at diplomatic receptions. If he had more than one film the second would be delivered at the departing handshake. He got most of his instructions the same way—handshakes.

The Soviet Union paid him \$750 a month during the five years he was in Washington, most of which went for travel and other expenses. He was holding off to draw much larger sums at "a later and more suitable date," but he was arrested before he got around to it.